

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT A 01065 230131Z
ACTION ARA-14

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7842

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT AU PRINCE 1065

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, HA, US
SUBJECT: MARCH 19 NYT STORY ON RIGAUD

1. WE HAVE JUST SEEN WENDELL RAWLS' STORY ON RIGAUD IN MARCH 19 NYT. FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW, STORY IS NOTABLE FOR CITING "SOURCES CLOSE TO THE INVESTIGATION" TO THE EFFECT THAT GOH CHARGES AGAINST RIGAUD ARE "TRUMPED UP" AND THAT PRELIMINARY PLANS ARE FOR JUSTICE TO ASK STATE TO APPLY DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE TO SPRING RIGAUD.

2. WE ATTEMPTED TO MAKE CLEAR TO FBI AGENTS WHO RECENTLY VISITED HAITI THAT EFFORTS TO SPRING RIGAUD COULD BE A VERY COSTLY UNDERTAKING IN VIEW OF EXTREME RIGIDITY OF GOH POSITION. ALTHOUGH GOH HAS INTEREST IN GOOD RELATIONS WITH MEXICO, THE GOH HAS REFUSED FOR A YEAR TO ALLOW RIGAUD TO LEAVE MEXICAN EMBASSY WHERE HE HAS SOUGHT POLITICAL ASYLUM BECAUSE A) IT REGARDS RIGAUD AS A COMMON CRIMINAL AGAINST WHOM CHARGES ARE PENDING; B) HIS ACTION HAS EMBARRASSED GOH; C) AND, PROBABLY, HE WOULD DELIBERATELY SEEK TO EMBARRASS DUVALIER FAMILY.

3. OBDURACY OF GOH POSITION IS FOUNDED ON BEDROCK OF FOREIGN SECRETARY BRUTUS' OPPOSITION TO "REWARDING
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COMMON CRIMINALS" AND WE SEE NO PROSPECT OF RELAXATION OF THAT POLICY SO LONG AS HE RETAINS PRESENT POSITION. HARDHEADEDNESS OF GOH APPROACH HAS UNDOUBTEDLY BEEN ENHANCED BY RIGAUD'S ENTHUSIASTIC IMPLICATION OF DUVALIER FAMILY IN HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH PRESS. ALLEGATIONS ABOUT "TRUMPED UP" CHARGES WILL OF COURSE HAVE SAME EFFECT.

4. WHILE JUSTICE MAY NOT YET HAVE DECIDED THE RIGAUD
ROUTE IS NECESSARY FOR ITS INVESTIGATION, WE WOULD
HOPE STATE COULD GET ACROSS TO JUSTICE AN ALL OUT
EFFORT TO GET RIGAUD OUT OF HAITI COULD BE VERY COSTLY
FOR OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS AND WOULD PROBABLY NOT
SUCEED.

JONES

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